



**"RISE UP, STEP UP, SPEAK UP"**

# OUR VOICE

OUR VOICE is a monthly newsletter of the Department of Personnel Management

January 31st, 2024

## PM Urge Public Servants to Unite and Serve



(Right-Left) Prime Minister, Hon. James Marape, Public Service Minister Hon. Joe Sungi, Dept. of Personnel Management Secretary, Ms. Taies Sansan and PM&NEC Chief Secretary, Amb. Ivan Pomaleu receiving the 2024 Management Action Plan as Rev. Joseph Walters commits and dedicates it.

### Inside this issue:

Agency Heads 2  
called upon to be prudent.

Public Servants 3  
challenged to reflect on individual contributions.

Merger a key 4  
reform agenda

Relby's journey 5  
with DPM.

DPM in Pictures 6

**P**rim Minister James Marape has challenged Public Servants to unite as one and serve Papua New Guinea with an unwavering commitment. He said this in Port Moresby at the John Guise Stadium while delivering his keynote address at the Public Service Dedication ceremony on January 5th this year. PM Marape said there are about 133,802 public servants who are on fixed income, including the politicians which is about 1.3 per cent of the country's total population, placing a moral obligation on public servants to serve diligently. "A substantial payout of K4.72 Billion was made during the last pay cycle of 2023 (pay 26) recognizing the hard work and dedication of the public service work force, notably parliamentarians were excluded from this payment," said the Prime Minister. More money goes to the districts, provinces, and the departments and agencies therefore more money coming to the departments and agencies therefore make the most of it to serve our country better because not doing delivery" he added. PM Marape was focused on the broader responsibility Public servants have in the service delivery to the nation, as the public services dedication ceremony sets the tone for the year ahead. PM Marape called for unity and a dedicated service to resonate among public servants, setting the stage for a year of collective commitment to building a more prosperous and united Papua New Guinea. "Unite for the common cause of the country, building the nation in service delivery", declared Prime Minister James Marape, echoing a call for collective effort and commitment.

## Agency Heads Must Be Prudent in their Roles



Public Service Minister Hon. Joe Sungi delivering his address at the 2024 Public Service dedication service at the Sir John Guise stadium.

Public Service Minister, Hon. Joe Sungi appealed to Agency Heads to be prudent in their management and supervisory roles this year (2024).

He made this statement at the 8th Public Service Dedication service, held at the Sir John Guise Indoor Complex on the 5th of January.

"I make this strong appeal to all agency heads again to be prudent in your management and supervisory roles in 2024. You need to be more vigilant and decisive as you deal with HR matters that come with financial implications," said Minister Sungi.

He also reminded agency heads that since the restoration of the Human Resource Powers on December 1st 2023, agency heads must take their time to coach, mentor and counsel their subordinates to perform better to modernize the Public Service

through the use of Information Communication and Technology (ICT).

Minister Sungi also urged Agency Heads to conduct timely staff Performance Appraisals in order for actions to be recommended for improvements to be made.

With the theme of the dedication service 'Building the Nation in Unity through Service Delivery', Minister Sungi reiterated the Prime Minister's call and challenged public servants to work together in unity and to ensure effective and efficient service delivery to our people.

"I thank you all Public Servants for the efforts that you have put into serving our people in the past years, and I encourage those that have done well to continue and those that have not put extra effort to serving our people to do so", said Minister Sungi.

"Let us share resources and work together to minimize wastages, especially those of that serve in the administrative sector.

We must take punitive measures and commit ourselves to provide support to our frontline Public Servants like Teachers, Health Workers and Law Enforcement Officers who service our people today," he said.

He further reminded Public Servants that the National Government is committed in paying them without failing each fortnight, despite some of the public servant's shortcomings in faithfully serving the people and the country with full commitment and dedication.

"It is at this occasion that we pay full attention to high-level directives from our Prime Minister and seek Heavenly-Counsel from the servant of God to re-assess ourselves whether we have served well and truly within the public service code of conduct". He also encouraged public servants to change their bad habits of poor dressing, poor attendance, laziness, bad behavior and careless attitudes, seeking favors and not serving to the expectations of the positions they hold.

## Public Servants Challenged to Reflect on Individual Contributions



DPM female officers all smiles and posing for a group photo after the 8th Public Service Dedication Service.

**P** rime Minister James Marape in his keynote address challenged each and every Public Servants to reflect on their individual contributions, posing a powerful question: "Am I doing enough for my people and country?"

PM Marape urged them to join him and the Government in constructing a better Papua New Guinea.

The Prime Minister also acknowledged the contributions of Public Servants, highlighting the significance of their roles in driving the country forward.

Marape's address was focused on the broader responsibility public servants hold in the service of the nation, as the public services dedication service set the tone for the year ahead.

His impassioned call for unity and dedicated service resonated among public servants, setting the stage for a year of collective commitment to building a more prosperous and united Papua New Guinea.

"Unite for the common cause of the country, building the nation in service

delivery", declared Prime Minister James Marape.

He echoed a call for collective effort and commitment following this year's dedication theme of 'Building the Nation through Service Delivery

Public Servants in the National Capital

by the Prime Minister James Hon. James, the Public Service Minister Hon. Joe Sungi, members of the parliament and Heads of government agencies in the Nation's Capital.

Minister Sungi encouraged and urged them to work together and in unity to deliver services and build the nation.



(L-R): DPM Secretary, Ms. Taies Sansan and Commissioner General for IRC, Mr. Sam Koim during the Dedication service.

He also stressed the government's commitment to pay public servants every fortnight despite their short comings and faults.

The Public Services Minister Hon. Joe Sungi emphasized in his speech calling out all public servants to be productive, ensure they produce quality work and to be reliable.

"If you are not working according to the public service

hours coming in and going out of your own wish you need to improve."

"This year we need to push to uncover and pursue our leadership in the society, especially those who are in the administrative sectors to make some difference now for the good of this developing country" Minister Sungi told the public servants.

Districts gathered at the Sir John Guise Indoor Complex on the 5th of January this month to attend the annual public service dedication service.

The event which was co-hosted by the Department of Personnel Management and The Department for Community Development and Religion was attended

## Merger a Key Reform Agenda



(L-R) DPM Deputy Secretary ERS, Mr. Vele Ravugamani, APSC Commissioner Dr. Gordon Brouwer, Executive Manager CB&D Mrs. Agnes Tamate and Manager SCMS Mr. Jacob Tese posing for a group photo after their visit to the Australian Public Service Commission office in Canberra, Australia.

The merger between Public Services Commission and the Department of Personnel Management is a key reform agenda for the PNG Public Service said Australian Public Service Commissioner Dr. Brouwer.

He said the key ingredients of gaining and maintaining trust during the process of implementing a reform agenda are : Capability building, Integrity, Maintenance of work standards and effective workforce planning.

He made these remarks during his meeting with DPM officer on their visit to the Australian Public Service Commission in Canberra, Australia, last year.

He stressed that the two main indicators that reform exercises can be measured against, which are how well an institution does its job, and the level of honesty and fairness in the public service, highlighting the importance of considering an organiza-

tion's shared culture and common purpose.

"We are all stewards of the public service and the servants of the people and so the people's interest must always comes first," said Commissioner Dr. Brouwer.

Furthermore, he stated that merging of a key central government department and a constitutional office is a massive reform initiative that will require a number of important legislative and administrative reforms to implement this reform agenda.

Deputy Secretary Executive Resourcing Services Mr. Vele Ravugamani said that the merger between DPM and the public Services Commission is in its implementation stage, however, the PNG Public Service Commission has not come forward with their position on the merger.

"The Chief Secretary to the Government Mr. Ivan Pomaleu has already communicat-

ed with PSC on this NEC decision to merge with DPM, however, we are not sure of PSC's position as yet, otherwise it is a government directive that we have to position our department as to how we can respond to our mandated responsibilities," said Mr. Ravugamani.

Furthermore, Mr. Ravugamani expressed his gratitude to the Australian Public Service Commission who he said will support DPM during the transitioning stage and will continue to show their support in any future endeavors that DPM embarks on, hence, the visit to APSC will maintain and strengthen the relationship between the two organizations. Team DPM was comprised of Deputy Secretary ERS Mr. Ravugamani who attended on behalf of Secretary, Ms. Taies Sansan,. He was accompanied by Executive Manager Capacity Building and Development Ms. Agnes Tamate and Manager Salaries, Compliance and Monitoring Committee Mr. Jacob Tese on the five-day visit.

## Relby's Journey with DPM



Principal Legal Officer Ms. Relby Luke

**M** eet Relby Luke, the Principal Legal Officer for the Department of Personnel Management. Ms. Luke who returned in September from Melbourne Australia after completing her Masters in Employment and Labor Relations Law.

Relby is from one of the D'Entrecasteaux Islands of Milne Bay Province called Normanby and is married with two beautiful kids.

She began her formal education in 1998 in a school that was established in the 90's and still exist today. Hohola Demonstration Primary School or Hox Dem as they use to call it back in those days. She spent eight wonderful years of her early childhood in this institution. "I must say, this was the place where many of the principles I hold at heart today were taught and I owe it to the teachers, especially my very first teacher Mr. Auri" Relby said. After completing her Primary School, in 2006 she secured a placing at Kilakila Secondary School here in the Nation's capital

and spent another four years of her teenage life in the city's capital.

"The four years didn't come easy for me, especially having been raised single handedly by my dad" she recalled. Family issues within her family were the biggest motivating factor that steered her in working towards who she is today.

Relby then made up her mind on her future ambi-

tions, she decided to take up law studies at the University of Papua New Guinea in 2010 and successfully graduated with a degree in law in 2014.

In 2015, she was amongst the many lawyers that got admitted to the National and Supreme Courts of PNG. Soon after being admitted to the bar, she secured employment with the department and have been with DPM since, hence making it her first employer. She commenced employment as a legal officer and gradually took up the position of senior legal and was further promoted to principal legal officer before undertaking further studies in Australia.

Relby's current position plays a significant role in supporting the office of the Secretary through the provision of legal advice on employment matters. More importantly, the interpretation of the law that establishes the foundation of the department's existence and that is the Public Service Management Act. She also defends the department in litigation matter through providing support to the office of the Solicitor General and

provide necessary legal advice to other wings of the department as and when requested.

In 2022, she applied for the Australia Awards Scholarship program and was privileged enough to have been awarded with this prestigious scholarship for further studies in Australia to study Masters of Employment and Labor Relations Law at the University of Melbourne for a year.

"Life in Melbourne was totally different from life in PNG and I can honestly say that after two days of arriving in Melbourne, I wanted to return home. It was winter when I arrived and God knows how cold and depressing it was for me. Make matters worse, I kept getting lost in the big city. Everything was at your fingertips or a button away but it was a whole new experience for me" Relby said.

She said her biggest challenge was missing her family, especially her kids who are very young in age and her sick mum, whom she just lost early last year to a fatal disease. Relby also mentioned that being away from her family, friends and country made her realize that our mental health is a serious concern affecting our daily lives and that depression was real. Despite these challenges, she pulled through and completed her studies and is now looking forward to attending her graduation which is scheduled to occur in August of this year, 2024.

Relby wishes to thank the Australian Government for the opportunity to further her education in her field of expertise and also the Department of Personnel Management for allowing her to take on this offer. She also extends her appreciation to her fellow colleagues who have helped her in one way or another. "Never compare yourself to anyone and never look down on yourself, God has a plan for each and every one of us hence be patient and never ever give up on your dreams".

